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#### 'I/A' ITEM NOTE

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

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Subject: Draft REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments **(first reading)**  
- Adoption of the Council's position at first reading and of the statement of the Council's reasons  
= Statements

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#### Statement by the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic welcomes the introduction of the Small Project Funds (SPF) in the Interreg Regulation.

The Czech Republic understands that the SPF may be governed in partnership, similarly to other operations under the Interreg Regulation. That includes equal and equivalent approach to managing the SPF by the partners on both sides of the border. Continuation of the current practice was behind the intention of the Council and the European Parliament during the negotiation when they extended the list of potential beneficiaries of the SPF in the course of the negotiation of the Regulation, respecting the call from the beneficiaries on the local and regional level. It was finally included in the compromise text.

Implementation of the SPF in the partnership will allow for continuation of the long-standing approach to managing the SPF and the current practice, it will ensure the same level of service for applicants and final beneficiaries of small projects on both sides of the border and it will not lead to

establishing additional new cross-border entities only for the purpose of SPF management causing additional administrative burden and costs. Different interpretation might dismantle already existing and well-established relations and trust on both sides of the border. It could decrease the quality of services provided to the European citizens and go against the good practice already applied in the regions.

### **Statement by Hungary**

The procedure towards the adoption of the Cohesion Policy regulations has reached another important step. Hungary sees it necessary to reiterate its earlier statement regarding the representation and interpretation of gender in these regulations.

Equality between women and men is enshrined in the treaties of the European Union as a fundamental right. Hungary ensures equality between women and men within the framework of its national legal system in accordance with internationally binding human rights instruments and within the framework of fundamental values and principles of the European Union.

For these reasons Hungary interprets the concept of “gender“ as reference to sex, in line with Article 8, 10, 19 and 157 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Article 21 and 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Furthermore Hungary is convinced that the content of gender is not appropriate to be defined in these legislative documents.

In line with these and its national legislation, Hungary interprets the concept of ‘gender’ as reference to ‘sex’ and the concept of ‘gender equality’ as reference to the ‘equality between men and women’ in the Regulations. As regards the breakdown of data, Hungary believes that the first line of Annex I and Annex II of the ESF+ Regulation (and also footnote 27 in Annex III of JTF Regulation) should be applied and refer to the term “gender” and the parenthesis as a whole and not only one of the subcategories listed there.

Bearing in mind the fact that determining the content of the term “gender” falls under the exclusive competence of the Member States, the relevant recitals, articles, annexes and footnotes should be understood as referring to the term gender interpreted in accordance with national legislation.

### **Statement by Poland**

Equality between women and men is enshrined in the treaties of the European Union as a fundamental right. Poland ensures equality between women and men within the framework of the Polish national legal system in accordance with internationally binding human rights instruments and within the framework of fundamental values and principles of the European Union. For these reasons, in wordings referring to gender Poland will interpret it as a equality between women and men, according to Article 8 TFEU.

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